

TWO
SERMONS
ON

3,
ROM. xiii. 1, 2.

I. Concerning the DUTY of the SUBJECT.

II. Setting forth the Sin and Folly of entring
into CONSPIRACIES against the present
GOVERNMENT.

PREACHED in the
CATHEDRAL at WORCESTER,
ON

Novemb. 18, and 25. 1722.

By *FR. HARE*, D.D. Dean of *Worcester*,
and Chaplain in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

*Published at the Desire of the Reverend the Chapter,
and other Gentlemen present.*

republished in his Works Vol. 2. p. 1746
Vol. 1. p. 196.



LONDON:

Printed by S. BUCKLEY in Amen-Corner. M.DCC.XXIII.

(Price One Shilling.)

TWO
SERMONS
ON

R O M. xiii. 1, 2.

- I. Concerning the Duty of the Subject.
- II. Setting forth the Sin and Folly of entering into CONSPIRACIES against the present



in the

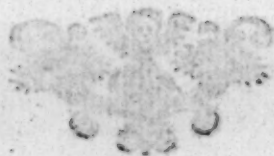
CATHEDRAL at WORCESTER,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 18, and 25, 1722.

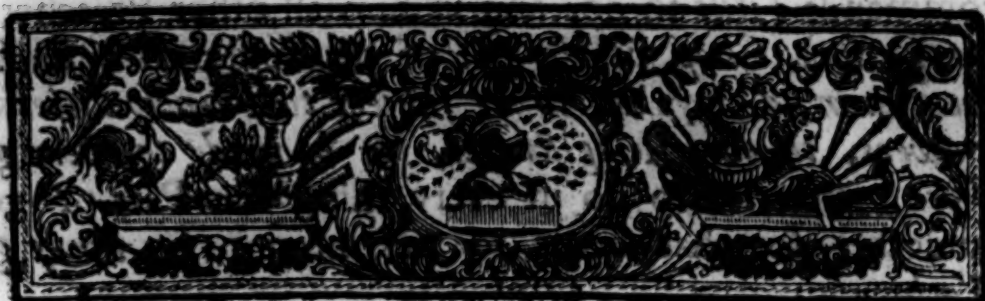
By R. R. HARRIS, D.D. Dean of Worcester,
and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

Published at the Desire of the Reverend the Chapter
and other Gentlemen present.



L O N D O N :

Printed by S. BUCKLEY in New-Court, M. B. C. 1722.
(Price One Shilling.)



R O M. XIII. 1, 2.

*Let every Soul be subject unto the higher Powers.
For there is no Power but of God: The Powers that be, are ordained of God.*

Whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation.



THE Ministers of the Gospel are by their Profession Ministers of Peace; and from thence alone it is easy to deduce the Obligation they are under to teach Obedience to the Magistrate, since without that no Peace can be maintained. But it is not their general Character only obliges them to this; whatever it is the Duty of *Christians* to practise, that it is the Duty of the Ministers of *Christ* to preach. But among the Duties required of *Christians* by the Author of our Faith, Obedience to the Magistrate is evidently one, and that not the least. The first Preachers of the Gospel, the Apostles themselves, have set us an Example in this Particular; St. *Paul* in the Text, and St. *Peter* in his first Epistle.

And what *St. Paul* did himself, he in very express Terms commands *Titus* to do, and in him all other Preachers of the Gospel, *Chap. iii. Ver. 1.* of his Epistle to him; *Put them in mind*, says he, *to be subject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magistrates, to be ready to every good Work*; that is, to do in every thing the Part of good Subjects; for that seems to be meant, by *every good Work*.

This then we are in Strictness obliged to, as Ministers of *Christ*, and Preachers of his Gospel. And as nothing is of more Importance to the Welfare of Society, than a peaceable Submission to Authority, the Laws of the Land do in the strongest Manner require of us the same Duty; and the Church hath given us an Example for the due Performance of it, in her Homilies against *Rebellion*. It is true indeed, that Discourses of this Kind have for many Years been in great Disuse, and that Disuse is now made an Argument against them by the Malignancy of some People, who like no Politicks in the Pulpit, but such as their Governours would not like. They are well enough pleased to hear Sedition from thence, they will hearken with great Attention to a Preacher who entertains them with Satyr and Invective against their Superiors, and without Modesty or Truth arraigns the Government, tho' to the apparent Disturbance of that Peace and Order, which by the Laws of God and Man he is bound to maintain: But if a Preacher tells them of their Duty in these Matters, and exhorts them to shew themselves good Subjects, he goes, they think, out of his Sphere, and meddles with Things that do not concern him, and which are not proper for that Place. But it is in Truth far otherwise, and what they think a Fault to do, it would be very inexcusable, if upon proper Occasions Preachers did not do. If such arguments have of late Years been seldom handled in the Pulpit, it has not proceeded from any Consciousness in them, that it is a Business improper and unbecoming them, nor indeed from any designed Neglect
of

of what they knew to be their Duty; but because they thought there was little or no Occasion for it, as indeed in quiet Times there is not. The People of this Nation, God be thanked, are not ordinarily, and of themselves, inclined to Tumult and Sedition; much less to take Arms and break out into Rebellion: There is no Danger of this from the Generality of the People, unless they are oppressed by great and real Grievances, or by the artful Endeavours of factious Men are made to believe, and strongly to apprehend imaginary ones. For this Reason there is seldom much Occasion to press on the People, in set Discourses, their Duty to the King, especially since it is by the Wisdom of the Church worked into every Part of the publick Service; and if they are by the Discourses they hear from the Pulpit, made good *Christians*, it is impossible they should be ill Subjects.

This is the Reason of that Disuse these Discourses have fallen into. But when the Times grow unquiet, when a Spirit of Sedition shakes the Land, when the Disaffection of some, and the Indifference of others, encourages an implacable and restless Faction to take new Life, and employ all their wicked Arts to disturb the publick Peace, and attempt the Subversion of the Government; when to this End no Means are left unattempted to infuse causeless Jealousies into the People; when false and odious Colours are put upon every Part of the Administration; when the very Person of the King, and the Dignity of his August House are calumniated and vilified; when every Corner of our Streets, and not the Corners only, but even the publick Places, are filled with the most virulent and treasonable Libels: When this is the Case, then for the Ministers of the Gospel to be silent, is highly criminal; it is then their indispensable Duty to lift up their Voice, *and to shew Jacob their Sins, and Israel their Transgressions*; they are then inexcusable before God and Man, if they do not all they can, to stem this Torrent
of

of Sedition, to refute the Lies and Calumnies of factious Men, to arm the People against the Impressions, which Sedition, under the Disguise of Patriotism, endeavours to make upon them; and to keep them stedfast in their Duty to God, and the King. For the King is the *Minister of God*; and if we would be true to God, and do his Will, we must be true and faithful to the Vicegerent he has set over us.

I wish this were not our Case, and consequently that there were no Occasion for a Discourse of this Nature; but it is too notorious to be denied, the Times do loudly cry the contrary, and call us to the Discharge of this Part of our Duty. There has long been discovered a dangerous Conspiracy, a monstrous and unnatural Design, aiming at nothing less than the Overthrow of our present happy Establishment, and to destroy the King, and the whole Protestant Royal Family. What the Clergy think to be their Duty on this Occasion, may be seen in the late dutiful and affectionate Address of the two Houses of *Convocation*: In Discharge of what is there promised, and for the important Reasons there given, I have chosen this memorable Passage of *St. Paul*, concerning the *Subjects Duty* to the *higher Powers*, to press upon you from thence a Sense of your Allegiance, and to convince you of the Sin and Folly of going into, or any way encouraging the Endeavours of wicked Men for the Subversion of the present Government, whatever plausible or specious Pretences their black Designs are covered with.

But before I do this, which will fill a Discourse itself, it will be necessary to explain to you, as clearly as I can, what it is *St. Paul* here says, and to give you the true and full Meaning of these Words; it having been their Misfortune, in the Heat of Controversy, to be forced into opposite Extremes; many making them a just Ground for a passive Obedience to all Governours, however unjust and oppressive, in the most absolute and unlimited

unlimited Manner; others on the contrary, pretending to find in them Grounds and Reasons for Resistance in some Cases; when it is most certain that neither the one, nor the other, can with Justness be inferred from them. The Words themselves contain first a Duty, and then the Motives, or Arguments on which the Apostle grounds it. *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers.* there is the Duty: *For there is no Power but of God: The Powers that be, are ordained of God.* There is the Ground on which the Obedience of the Subject is founded: From whence it follows by undeniable Consequence, that *he who resisteth the Power*, that is, refuseth to acknowledge the Government and to yield the Obedience he ought to pay to it, (which Refusal, whatever way it be expressed at first, sooner or later, it almost always ends in open Force or Violence, and so very properly termed Resistance) *resisteth the Ordinance of God.* And what can they, who do so, expect from thence, but that they shall thereby receive to themselves *Damnation?*

The Duty is contained solely in these Words; *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers.* The Persons to whom Subjection is due, are here called *the higher Powers*; that is, those who are invested with the supreme or sovereign Authority, in the several Governments the World is divided into. Whether one Person, or many govern, whether it be a Commonwealth, or Aristocracy, or Monarchy, and whatever Kind that Monarchy be of, whether pure or mixt, whether limited or absolute: Whatever the Government be, all Persons living under it are by this Text equally obliged to pay Obedience to it; there is no Preference intended to be given by it to one Form of Government before another. The *higher Powers* in each and every one of them have, in virtue of this Text, a Right to the Obedience of their Subjects, of all their Subjects without Exception; *Let every Soul, that is, every Person, be subject to the higher Powers.*

Here is no Exception for any Persons, of whatever Condition or Profession: Ecclesiasticks are bound to obey the civil Magistrate, as much as the meanest of the Laity; this, says St. *Chrysostom* upon the Place, is enjoined to *Priests and Monks equally with others*; for St. *Paul* says, *Let every Soul be subject*; every Soul, “ *though he be an* “ *Apostle, though he be an Evangelist, though he be a* “ *Prophet, whoever he be, he must be subject to the* “ *higher Powers.*” Thus St. *Chrysostom*. So little did the Bishops of the *Christian Church* at that Time dream of that Exemption from the Authority of the civil Magistrate, which the Clergy of the Church of *Rome* have since claim’d; and which some other Ecclesiasticks seem unwilling to renounce, while they act, as if they had a Right to conspire and rebel with more Impunity than other Men. But if we will hear St. *Paul*, if we will hear the most learned of the Fathers comment on him, Rebellion in an Ecclesiastick is equally criminal, as in any other Man; his Guilt before God is at least the same, if not greater, and the *Minister of God* has therefore an equal Right to punish him.

But there is no need of more Words to prove, either who are the Objects of the Obedience here enjoined, or from whom it is due. The Object is the Magistrate; and who that in Fact is, except in Times of Confusion and Anarchy, the Subject cannot but know, and more he need not, as will appear hereafter; and the Magistrate all Persons must obey. All the Difficulty is about the Nature and Extent of this Obedience, which can never be deduced with any Certainty from this single Word, *ὑποτασσέσθω*, *be subject*. From hence indeed we see, that Subjection or Obedience is due; but for the Degree of Subjection or Obedience, there is nothing in this single Word can serve as a Measure to us; to settle this, we must fetch in other Helps, which either Reason or Scripture can furnish us with: For the same Word is used of the Obedience required from Wives to Husbands; from Servants

vants to Masters; from the People to their Pastors; and in general, from *Christians* to one another. 'Tis plain therefore, no Bounds or Measures of Obedience can be settled from this single Word, since 'tis used of Persons in so many Relations, each of which require a different Degree of Subjection to be paid to them. Nay, in some Instances, the Expression is made stronger by the Addition of other Words, than it is here, as *Eph. v. 22. Wives submit your selves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord*; as in the next Chapter he bids Servants to *be obedient to their Masters, as to the Lord*; in which last Place, tho' the *Verb* be not the same, yet it is exactly of the same Import. There is no manner of Difference, in this Argument, between ὑποτάσσασθαι and ὑπακούειν; and therefore as he uses the latter here to express the Duty of Servants, so *Tit. ii. 9.* he uses the other, where he exhorts Servants to *be obedient to their own Masters, and to please them well in all things*; and both Words are rendred alike in the *English*. And *Col. iii. 20.* the same Apostle exhorts Children *to obey their Parents in all things.* τὰ τέκνα, ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσι κατὰ πάντα. These are as strong Expressions as can well be conceived, and yet 'tis certain and allowed of all, that Obedience is not so enjoined by them, as to exclude all Limitation or Exception. Much less can an absolute and unlimited Obedience be inferred from a single Word, when no such Additions are made to give a farther Strength and Force to the Expression. No, to do this, to find what Obedience is here required, we must, as I have said, call in other Helps; and these must be fetched from Reason and Scripture, from the Law of Nature and Nations, but above all, from the Laws of the respective Governments every Man is under.

This Word, *let him be subject*, is by the Consent of all good Interpreters to be understood, not in a *passive*, but in a *reciprocal* Sense, *let him subject himself*, that is, yield Submission and Obedience to the *higher Powers*. Here then it is at first Sight evident, that this Limitation must be understood,

that it be in Things lawful ; for both Reason and Scripture teach us, that we must *obey God, rather than Man*. But what if our Governors notwithstanding insist upon a Compliance with them, and threaten to punish a Refusal in the most exemplary Manner, or any other Way injure and oppress those they should protect? what a Submission is then due from us, is the great Question; whether in virtue of this Precept, when we can't by an *active* Obedience comply with our Superiors, a *passive* one then begins, and we are obliged by it patiently to suffer whatever they inflict, and tamely to submit to the Invasions of our civil or religious Rights, however illegal and unjust; and whether this be the Duty of all Subjects in all Cases, and not only of private and single Persons, but of whole Nations. And many, it is well known, have understood this Text in this extended Sense, as obliging to a passive Obedience in all Cases whatsoever, because, in their Opinion, to enjoin Obedience to the Magistrate in all Things lawful, is a poor Business, scarce worthy the Apostle; 'tis so plain a Duty that no body can be ignorant of it, much less can it be thought the Apostle would enjoin it with so much Earnestness, and inforce it with so many and such strong Expressions, as he does here, and in the following Verses.

But this Objection is, I conceive, without Foundation, and arises, partly from a very wrong, tho' very common Notion, concerning the Perfection of the *Scriptures*, as if it were requisite to that Perfection, that the *Scriptures* should contain Answers to all Questions, and Solutions of all Difficulties, upon all Subjects that have any relation either to Religion or civil Life, and in all Times, at what distance soever from the writing of them; (than which no one Thing seems to have occasioned more false Interpretations,) and partly from the want of sufficiently considering, what the Apostle's Design in this Place is, with what View he writes, what gave Occasion to it, what false Doctrine or prevailing Error he intended to oppose. The Knowledge of which is the only good Key to the opening

opening the true Meaning of this Passage : which I shall therefore endeavour to explain to you with all the Clearness I can.

The Design then of the Apostle, I take, certainly to have been this; to convince the *Jewish Christians*, that it was not only lawful, but their Duty to submit to the *Roman Government*; and by that Means to remove the most fatal and pernicious Imputation that could be thrown on *Christ* and his Religion, by removing all just Cause for it; which by the indiscreet Zeal of many of them had been given, and by their Enemies Occasions were taken, when not given. It is most evident, nothing could do so much Hurt to the *Christian Religion* in its Infancy, as to have it thought an Enemy to Government. It was this Imputation that condemned our Saviour himself : The High-Priests indeed in their Council declared him guilty of Death for Blasphemy, in making himself *the Son of God*; but that which was made his capital Crime, when accused to the *Roman Governor*, was, that he was an Enemy to *Cæsar*, and set up himself as King, in Opposition to him. Thus we read *Luc. xxiii. 1, 2. The whole Multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate, and they began to accuse him, saying, we found this Fellow perverting the Nation, and forbidding to give Tribute to Cæsar, saying, that he himself is King.* And *John xix. 12. when Pilate had a Mind to release him, as finding nothing worthy of Death proved against him, the Jews cried out, saying, if thou let this Man go, thou art not Cæsar's Friend : whosoever maketh himself a King, speaketh against Cæsar. And when Pilate asked them, saying, shall I crucifie your King? the Chief Priests answered, we have no King but Cæsar. And upon this Pilate delivered him to be crucified, v. 15, 16.*

Thus early did the Charge of Sedition and Treason begin against that Religion, which in the Nature of it is the farthest in the World from it. It brought the Author of it to the Cross, and was no less successfully urged against his Followers, their Enemies well

knowing, that no Accusation could more effectually incense the Magistrates every where against them. Thus *Acts xvii. 5, &c.* upon Paul and Silas preaching at *Thessalonica*, the Jews enraged, took to them certain lewd Fellows, of the baser sort, and assaulted the House of Jason, and drew him, and certain of the Brethren, unto the Rulers of the City, crying, These that have turned the World upside down, are come hither also, and do contrary to the Decrees of Cæsar, saying, there is another King, one Jesus. But Paul and Silas could not be found, so they took Security of the rest, and let them go. And the same Accusation was brought against St. Paul before Felix, *Acts xxiv.* We have found this Man, says Tertullus, a pestilent Fellow, and a Mover of Sedition among all the Jews, throughout the World; and the Jews assented, saying, that those Things were so. But St. Paul in his admirable Defence defies them to prove any Thing of this Kind against him; he affirms, that they found him not in the Temple with Multitude, or with Tumult, nor disputing with any one, nor stirring up the People, neither in the Synagogues, nor in the City. It was, no doubt, chiefly these Accusations, that brought on this great Apostle those many Sufferings, the Stripes, the Imprisonments, the Persecutions, the Afflictions, the Deaths he mentions in several Parts of his Epistles, and at last the Loss of Life it self.

But there is no need of enlarging, to shew either how common a Practice it was to charge the first Christians with being Movers of Sedition; or how fatal such a Charge must be to them, where it was believed; and consequently, of what Importance it was for the Teachers to take all possible Care, that the Disciples might give no just Colour for it, but behave themselves in all Things, as became good Subjects. It is more material to enquire what Ground there was for such a Charge, or what there was either in the Doctrine, or Practice of the first Christians, that could give a handle to it: For it is hardly credible, such an Imputation should be so general, without some real,

real, or at least seeming Ground for it. Now one Cause of this I have already pointed out, *viz.* that *Jesus* was looked on by his Disciples to be the *great King* promised in the Prophets, and who about the Time that he appeared, was universally expected to come. How much this was the Expectation of the *Jews*, not to mention several Places in our own Books, we may learn from a known Passage in *Suetonius*, who speaking of the Destruction of the *Jews* by *Vespasian*, says, there had been an Opinion universally spread in the Eastern Parts, that a Prince from among the *Jews* should about that Time arise, who should subdue all other Kingdoms, and make them Masters of the World *. This naturally created a Jealousy in the *Romans*, and made them have a watchful Eye upon all who pretended to be the Person so much expected: For many such there were in the Compass of a few Years, who drew great Numbers of People after them; as *Christ* foretold there would be. *False Christs, and false Prophets*, says he, *shall rise, and shall shew Signs and Wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the Elect.* Mark xiii. 22. Indeed the Kingdom claimed by *Christ* was of such a Nature, when rightly understood, as needed to have given no Umbrage to the *Roman* Government, as our Saviour himself argues, *Joh.* xviii. 36. but it is no Wonder, if this was not so easily understood by others, when the Disciples themselves were for a Time carried away with that Prejudice, which was then common to the whole Nation of the *Jews*, and were big with Expectations, that *Christ* should be a mighty temporal Deliverer, and that tho' he were by Death for a short Season taken from them, he should in a little Time return with Power

* The Words of *Suetonius* are, Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus & constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut eo tempore *Judae* profecti rerum potirentur. *Vesp.* c. 4. And *Tacitus* says the same Thing in almost the same Words. Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis Sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique *Judearum* potirentur. *Hist.* l. 5. c. 13.

and great Glory, and subdue all Nations to himself, that *his Throne should be established in Sion, and that all People should flow to him to Jerusalem.* People fill'd with such Hopes, and comforting themselves with such Expectations against all Sufferings, might very easily, both by their Words and Actions, give Umbrage to their civil Governors, except that at first perhaps they might think them too inconsiderable, to be much minded.

Another Cause of Jealousy, and of a piece with this, was the *Liberty they had in Christ.* This *Liberty of Christians*, as well as the *Kingship* of their Head, was of a spiritual Nature, and therefore when rightly explain'd, the Magistrate had nothing to fear from it; but for a Number of People to talk much of Liberty, to a *Roman Governor*, carried a seditious Sound with it, and looked like a Design of throwing off the Yoke, and setting up for themselves: And their Governors had the more Reason for such Apprehensions, from what they saw every Day practised in those Times among the *Jews*: and some even of the *Christians*, no doubt, gave but too just Occasion for them, by abusing their Liberty in *Christ* to the very worst Purposes. They did, not a few, *defile the Flesh, despise Dominions, and speak evil of Dignities.* Jude 8. and 2 Pet. ii. 10. Accordingly we find both St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* warning *Christians* against the Abuses of it. The latter in his Epistle to the *Gal.* v. 13. *Brethren, ye have been called unto Liberty, only use not Liberty for an Occasion to the Flesh:* And St. *Peter* 1 Ep. ii. 16. closes his Exhortation to Obedience with these Words; *As free, and not using your Liberty for a Cloak of Maliciousness;* that is, as a Pretence for doing Evil, or for seditious Practices, which seems to be principally meant by Maliciousness in that Place.

But whatever Handle the Indiscretion of some *Christians*, and the Corruption of others, might by the Abuse of their *Liberty*, or of *Christ's Kingdom*, give for the Magistrate's looking on them as a perverse, factious, seditious

tious Generation of Men (of which there could not be in any of them the least Appearance, which their Enemies would not in the most tragical manner exaggerate, and impute to the whole Party,) that which did them most Prejudice, and created in the Magistrate the greatest Suspicion of them, as Enemies to all civil Government, and led him to put the worst Construction upon their Doctrines and Actions, no doubt, was the seditious Opinions and licentious Practices of a new Sect sprung up among the *Jews* in our Saviour's Time, and under a Leader of the same Country, I mean the Followers of * *Judas* of *Galilee*, who, as we read *Acts* v. 37. *rose up in the Days of the Taxing, and drew away much People after him.* The Taxing here mentioned, is not the Enrollment at the Time of our Saviour's Birth, but a second that was about ten Years after, when upon the Banishment of *Archelaus*, who succeeded his Father *Herod*, *Judea* was reduced into the Form of a *Roman* Province. At this Time, and upon this Occasion, arose this *Judas*, who, as *Josephus* informs us, set up a new Sect among the *Jews*, in other respects agreeing much with the *Pharisees*, but distinguished by a furious, ungovernable Zeal for Liberty; they maintained it was unlawful for the People of God to submit to any foreign Yoke, or acknowledge any Lord but God only. They thought it not only their Right, but their Duty to refuse Obedience to any Person the *Roman* Government should set over them; and in Maintenance of these Opinions committed the greatest Outrages. And this Sect, *Josephus* observes, spread

* An Account of this *Judas* and his Sect may be seen in *Josephus* his *Antiq.* l. 18. c. 1, 2. & de B. J. l. 2. c. 12. what Seditions afterwards sprang from these Beginnings, and to what monstrous Excesses a Spirit of Faction carried them, the Reader may see *Antiq.* l. 20. c. 6, 7. & de B. J. l. 2. c. 23. & l. 4. c. 10, 11, 16, 19, 20, 23, 24, 30, 35. & l. 7. c. 30, 34, 35, 37. which Places shew, *Josephus* had great Reason to say, that from the Rise of this Sect no Evil had befallen the Nation, which they were not the cause of.

mightily

mightily among the *Jews*, and infected great Numbers with the same Enthusiasm. And to these Enthusiasts the most profligate and vilest of the People joined themselves, who, under the Colour of *Liberty*, meant nothing but the *Pillage* and *Plunder* of the Country, which produced the most fatal Effects; for perpetual Tumults and Seditious filled all Places, and made *Judea* such a Scene of Misery as is not to be express'd, which nothing could put an end to, but the total Ruin of the Nation. But nothing that either themselves or Country suffered could abate their Rage and Zeal, they thought it the Cause of God, and rather chose to die a thousand Deaths, than quit their darling Delusion, and submit to the Powers which they could not with any Hopes of Success resist. And they were so far from thinking what they suffered from Men, to be the *Punishment of God*, and that the *Magistrate* was only *his Minister* to inflict it, that they gloried in their Sufferings, as undergone for his Sake, and therefore highly meritorious in his Sight: In short, they bore the greatest Torments with an invincible Constancy, and were possessed in Defence of the worst Cause, with all that Assurance that can be expected in the best.

The wild Opinions of these Men, as they spread greatly among the *Jews*, so did they infect some of the *Jewish* Christians, or at least were imputed to them by the *Romans*, not distinguishing between two Sects, which, however in some Appearances alike, were in Reality extremely different. It was for some time the Misfortune of the *Christians* to be confounded with the *Jews* in the Opinion the rest of the World had of them, and by that means to be involved in the same Calamities, and suffer in common with them. Of this we have a remarkable Instance in *Suetonius*, of great Use to our present Purpose. In his Life of *Claudius Caesar*, c. 25. he has these Words, *Judeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit*. He banished the *Jews* the City, who,
by

by the Instigation of one * *Chrestus*, that is *Christ*, were always making Disturbances, and stirring up Sedition. In these Words 'tis plain *Jews* and *Christians* are not with any Clearness distinguished from each other. But now as to the Matter contained in them, whatever Truth there were for the Charge which is here made the Ground of this Edict, whether there really were such Tumults then at *Rome*, and whether excited by *Jews* poisoned with the Opinions of this *Judas*, or by *Christians* also, as well as *Jews*; or whether it were a Calumny only cast on them by their Enemies, who bare an implacable Hatred to the *Jews* without Distinction, and interpreted to Sedition their Opposition to Idolatry, and their separate Meetings for their own Worship; whatever there really were in this Charge, a Spirit of Faction, Sedition, and perpetual Tumults, were, we see, in fact imputed to the *Jews*; and this, *impulsore Chresto*, as the Effect of their following *Christ*. If the occasion of this Edict was not any thing done at *Rome*, but the Tumults and Seditions at that time in *Judea*, tho' the Charge was but too true of the *Jews*, it was very unjustly imputed to *Christ*, and such as followed his Doctrine and Example. But however that be, this Edict was made but a † few Years before *St. Paul* wrote this Epistle; and at the Time he wrote, tho' the *Jews* might be quiet in other Places, yet in *Judea* things continued in the utmost Confusion, and gave the Emperor great Trouble, and made the very Name of *Jews* odious at *Rome*, whither *St. Paul* intended to go very soon himself.

* *Chrestus* being a Name the *Romans* were better acquainted with than *Christus*, that, and not any Design, seems to have been the true Reason of their putting one for the other in this and other Places.

† The learned Bishop *Pearson*, in his *Annales Paulini*, p. 12. places this Edict, which is the same with that mentioned *Acts* xviii. 2. in the 12th Year of *Claudius*, who did not reign quite 14. and the Epistle to the *Romans* he supposes written (p. 15.) in the 3^d of *Nero*; and *St. Paul* had then many Years intended a Journey to *Rome*. See C. I. V. 10, 11, 15. & C. 15. V. 22, 23, 24, 32.

How now could he prepare his Way better; how could he more effectually recommend himself to that Government, and disarm it of its Enmity to *Christians*, than by enjoining Obedience to the civil Magistrate in so distinguishing a manner, as he does in this place; in which he directly contradicts and condemns those wild Opinions that had infected so many of the *Jews*, and were, whether justly or not, generally charged upon the *Christians*?

This then is, I think, the * true Key to the Sense of this Text, 'tis the mad Zeal of *Judas* of *Galilee*, and his Sect, which had so much provoked the *Roman* Government by the perpetual Disturbances it made, and thereby drew so many Calamities upon the *Jews*, that the Apostle here opposes, and which he would prevent, or recover, *Christians* from falling into. The single Point was, Whether it were lawful for *Jews* to submit to the *Roman* Power; this these Zealots for Liberty denied even to the Death. *St. Paul*, in Opposition to these Men, and, in a just Abhorrence of their seditious Principles, affirms, it is not only lawful, but their Duty to submit, and yield Obedience to it. And this Duty he grounds upon this Principle, that *all Power is of God*, a Principle directly opposite to the Errors of those he is opposing. They thought no Power (over them at least) to be of God, but what was by God settled in their Law; *St. Paul*, on the contrary, declares there is no Power that is not of God. Which, it must be observed, is not a Doctrine peculiar to *Christianity*, as is commonly thought, much less to *St. Paul*, and still less is it an Inference drawn by him, as some would have it, from what is said of Governors in the following Verses; no, this is a Principle universally acknowledged by all wise Men, and received

* I am not a little confirmed in this Thought, by finding so good a Judge as *St. Jerom* in the same Opinion; who, in his Comment on *Tit. iii. 1.* has these Words of this Precept, *Propterea editum puto, quia Judæ Galilæi per illud Tempus dogma, adhuc vigeat, & habebat plurimas Sectatores.*

in all civilized Nations. The *Jewish* Zealots might have learnt it from their own Books, in which the *Wisdom* of God cries, *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice.* *Prov.* viii. 15. And *Dan.* ii. 22. 'tis declared, that *God removeth Kings, and setteth up Kings.* The same is very fully set forth in many Places of the Prophets; and the latter Books of the *Jews* express the same Doctrine still more clearly. Thus, *Eccl.* xvii. 17. *In the Division of the Nations of the whole Earth he set a Ruler over every People.* From hence the Followers of *Judas* might have learnt, that all Power is of God. But what deceived them seems to have been what follows, *But Israel is the Lord's Portion.* From whence they concluded, that whatever Right the Governors of the World had over their own People, none had Authority to govern them; they were under God only, as his Inheritance. As this Passage very plainly declares that all Government is of God, so I must observe, that the Writer of it does but copy what is declared by *Moses* in the Law, *Deut.* xxxii. 8. as the Reading then was, at least in the Book that this Author used, tho' in our Copies, and that the Seventy used, it be read otherwise:*

But nothing can more expressly declare all Power to be of God, than a Passage in the Book of *Wisdom*. There, at the 6th Chapter, the Writer, in the Person of *Solomon*, directs himself to Rulers thus; *Hear, O ye Kings, and understand; learn, ye that be Judges of the ends of the Earth. Give ear, you that rule the People, and glory in the Multitude of Nations. For Power is given you of the Lord, and Sovereignty from the Highest, who shall try your Works, and search out your Counsels. Because,*

* The Author of *Eccles.* seems to have read for *Gebuloth*, which the Seventy rightly render *Opus*, *Geburoth*, which may, I think, be rendred, *αρχαι*, or *δυνα-
μεις*; so that the difference is only of a single Letter, of *r* for *l*, which Letters in *Hebrew* are so alike, as to be often confounded; and this small Alteration would give much Light to a Place that is at present exceeding obscure.

being Ministers of his Kingdom, you have not judged aright, nor kept the Law, nor walked after the Counsel of God. What is declared in this Passage, is so perfectly agreeable to St. Paul, that one can hardly doubt but he had it in his View, especially since one may by other Places in his Epistles plainly see, he was no Stranger to this Book.

And as this Doctrine here taught by St. Paul, concerning the divine Origin of Government, and that *all Power is of God*, is no other than what was before taught and received among the *Jews*; so are the Sentiments of the wisest Philosophers and Law-givers among the *Greeks*, and of *Homer*, the Father of them, consonant hereto; as might be shewn by many Passages, were this a proper Place for it. To confine my self to *Homer*; who, that is at all acquainted with him, knows not his

Σκηπτῆρχος βασιλῆς, ὥτε Ζῆς κῦδος ἔδωκεν. l. A. 279. And
 — Eἰς κοῖραν ἔσω,
 Εἰς βασιλῆς, ὃ ἔδωκε Κρόνους παῖς ἀκυλομήτεω
 Σκῆπτρόν τ' ἠδὲ Δέμις — l. B. 204. And
 Τιμὴ δ' ἐκ Διὸς ἐστὶ — 197.

Which Places fully declare the Power of Kings to be from God. From whence 'tis familiar with him to stile Kings διογενῆς and διοτρεφεῖς; * that is, *born of God*, and *maintained by him*. I will only add, that the Sentiments of *Hesiod*, † the oldest *Greek* Writer next himself, appear to be the same, in those memorable Words,

Εκ δὲ Διὸς Βασιλῆες — Θ. 96.

Thus both, in perfect Conformity to Scripture. As indeed the more antient the Books of the Heathen

* 'Tis Eustathius his Observation upon the last mentioned Passage: ἐν αὐτῇ ἐφερμηνεύει, διὰ τὴν διογενῆς καὶ διοτρεφεῖς τὰς βασιλεῖς λέγει· ἔχ' ὅτι ἐκ Διὸς τὸ γένος ἔλκευσιν, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐξ ἐκείνης αὐτοῖς ἡ τιμή.

† The *Chronicon Marmoreum* makes *Hesiod* somewhat the older, but the general Opinion is otherwise.

World are, the more agreeable they are always found to the Books of the Old Testament. I will give but one Instance of this in *Homer*, but a very pertinent one to our present Subject; it is, that he ascribes every thing to a *divine Providence*, as the Scriptures every where do, and nothing to *Fortune*, which Word is not so much as once to be found in his Poems, large as they are. But neither *Homer*, nor the Scripture-Writers, imagined that God governed the World *ἀμίσως*, and without the Intervention of second Causes; and therefore whatever they taught of Governments being from God, they did not intend to exclude the Share that the People any where had in the first Erection, or in the Provision made for the Continuance of them. And so it is here with *St. Paul*; his Assertion, *that there is no Power but of God*, is no way inconsistent with any Rights the several Nations of the World might have in the first Establishment of their respective Governments, or the providing fit Persons, either by Election or otherwise, to succeed in them, or in the Limitation of the Power, and Nature of the Trust reposed in them, by any Compact or Consent, either tacit or express. For the Nature of Self-preservation, necessarily supplies some Conditions in all Submissions to Governors, however in the Terms unlimited and without Reserve. In short, he intended not to meddle with the civil Rights of any People one way or other, as will farther appear by and by. His Assertion is pointed against those factious Men, who maintained it was unlawful to submit to any human Government, as inconsistent with the Government of God, whom alone they would acknowledge to be their Lord and King. The Apostle's Design therefore in this Assertion, was to found the Right their then Governors had to their Obedience in the Will of God himself, in virtue of a Maxim acknowledged by the Wisdom of their own, as well as of all other civilized Nations, indeed by all Persons who owned a Providence.

And

And, as if this negative Assertion were not strong enough, but might some way be eluded, by their allowing it to hold only as to the Origin of Government, but no farther; he seconds this Assertion with an affirmative one in Terms more express and strong, and declares, that *the Powers that be, are ordained of God*; αἱ ἐξουσίαι ἐξουσίαι, that is, the several Powers or Governments, (which Terms can't be understood in an abstract Sense, but as including the Persons vested with those Powers, and administering those Governments) that were then in Being: All those Powers and Governments, he affirms to be, not *approved*, but *ordained*, or appointed by God. He does not say all *lawful* Powers, but all the Powers *that were in Being*, which is a very different thing; for had he said *lawful*, that must have been meant with respect either to God or Man; to have said the first, had been saying nothing to the Conviction of those who maintained that with respect to God no Powers were *lawful*; and to have limited his Assertion by the Addition of *lawful* with respect to Men, had been to involve private *Christians* in Disputes concerning the Titles of Princes, of which they neither could nor ought to judge*; and would have looked very suspicious with regard to the then Governors, who might by such a Limitation have imagined, that what Right the Apostle gave them to the Obedience of their Subjects with one Hand, he pulled away with the other, and that this Word was added only as a latent Reserve, to be made use of whenever they had a mind to withdraw their Allegiance, or to transfer it to another. Avoiding therefore all captious or invidious Expressions, he affirms of the Powers then in Being, of all Governors in quiet Possession of their Powers, acknowledged and submitted to by the Body or States of their respective

* *Hanc legem videmus sibi prescripsisse Christianos veteres, ut cuius imperium nato Fidem atque Obedientiam prestarent, neque ulli sub speciosis Nomimbus res novam accederent.* Grot. in Matt. c. 22. v. 16.

People, that *they are of God's Appointment*. Some have fancied, that these Words *ordained of God*, might also be rendred *ordained under God*, which makes Kings more directly his Vicegerents; but that Sense the Words in the Original can't possibly bear; nor is it truer of regal Government of whatever Species, than it is of any other, that it is ordained of God; the Assertion is equally true of all settled Governments, that are, or have been, or ever shall be.

Here then is fully asserted, and in the strongest Terms, the divine Right of Governors and Governments in general; that therefore it is the Will of God, that all Persons should acknowledge their Authority, and yield due Obedience to them. And they who refuse to do so, instead of thinking they do God Service in it, and that what they suffer for their Disobedience is meritorious in his Sight, ought to think just the contrary; that their Disobedience to their Governors is no other than Disobedience to God himself, and that the Punishment they suffer from their Governors for it, is not merely a Punishment from Men, but the Judgment of God upon them. For this is the Meaning of what follows, *If the Powers that be, are ordained of God, then every Power is the Ordinance of God, and he that disobeys the Power disobeys his Ordinance*. For the *Ordinance of God* does not here mean a Command of God, as some understand it, but the Government it self, that is disobey'd; which is not, according to St. Paul's Assertion, more truly a *human Ordinance*, than it is a divine one. But he that disobeys a divine Ordinance or Institution, and in so doing rebels against God, what can he look for but Vengeance and Confusion from him? What can such expect, but that they *shall receive to themselves Damnation*?

The Word here rendred, *Damnation*, in the Original is *Κεῖμα*, and signifies *Judgment*, or *Punishment*, of whatever kind; whence a Doubt arises, what Sense it is to be taken in here. Some would have it mean *eternal Damnation*,

nation, led to that Meaning from the common Acceptation of the Word, the Greatness of the Offence, and the mention just before made of God: Since it is an Offence directly against God, the Punishment, they think, must come from him, and be so intended by the Apostle, and consequently must be *Damnation*. Others think, the Punishment inflicted by the Magistrate on disobedient Subjects, is here only meant, because it follows immediately, that *Rulers are not a Terror to good Works, but to the evil*, with more to the same purpose; in which it is said, *that the Magistrate bears not the Sword in vain, but is a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doth Evil*. But neither of these Opinions are, I think, exactly right; that which is so, is compounded of both. The Punishment here meant, is at the same time the Punishment of Man, and of God; of the Magistrate, who immediately inflicts it, in Obedience to God, and in virtue of the Power derived from him; and of God, whose *Minister* he is, and is so for this very purpose, *for the Punishment of evil doers, and for the Praise of them that do well*. This Sense only agrees with what goes before and follows after, and unites God and Man together, whose Parts by this Interpretation are made to concur in the Execution of the same Judgment: And 'tis for that reason, that in all that follows, the Magistrate is considered as *God's Minister*. And this Sense only stands in direct Opposition to the Error of those *St. Paul* condemns. They thought, what they suffered for their Disobedience, however it were intended by Men, was Merit with God; and though they were *punished in the Sight of Men, yet was their Hope full of Immortality*. No, says *St. Paul*, there's no Merit in it, what they suffer, though inflicted by Men, is the just Punishment of God upon them, for their Disobedience to him; for it is really against him they rebel, while they pretend to fight against Men only, and for him.

That

That the Words will bear this Sense, and may denote a temporary Punishment in this World, which yet shall really be a Punishment from God, may be seen by another Place of the same Apostle, 1 Cor. xi. 29. where speaking of the Lord's Supper, he says, that *he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself*; that is, Κεῖμα, which in the Margin is better rendred, *Judgment*. For how does St. Paul shew, *they eat and drink Damnation to themselves*? Why from hence, *for this cause*, says he, *many are weak and sickly amongst you, and many sleep, or die*. These Weaknesses therefore, these Sicknesses, these Deaths, are the Damnation, or Judgment, here meant. Upon which it immediately follows, that if *we judged our selves, we should not be judged*, that is, thus judged, *of the Lord*. For this Judgment is for a chastning to us; *when we are thus judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the World*. Κεῖνόμενοι παυσιδωμέθα, ἵνα μὴ κατακριθῶμεν. Here we see the Punishment they suffered expressly oppos'd to Damnation; but what is oppos'd to Damnation, can't possibly be it self Damnation. So that in this place, Κεῖμα, or Judgment, means truly and properly a temporary Punishment in this World, and yet at the same time, such as is divine, and really from God. But it will be said, what then, will not Men be condemned in the other World for such heinous Sins, as prophaning the Lord's Supper, and disobeying Magistrates? Yes certainly, as well as for other heinous Sins, if not sincerely repented of in time. But it does not follow that, That is the Meaning of the Word here; every thing could not be said in every Place. It was sufficient to the Apostle's Purpose to shew, that Disobedience in them now under the *Roman* Government, was not less an Offence to God, than when under Governors of their own, Disobedience to whom their *Law* punished with Death, *Deut. xvii. 12.*

This then I take to be the true and sole Meaning of this Text; St. *Paul* commands all Persons to be obedient to their Governors *for Conscience sake*, as they are the *Ordinance of God*, and upon pain of incurring his Displeasure, who hath empowered Governors to punish Disobedience in the severest manner; and what they do is his Act by their Hand. This was the single Point in view; and this Point being gained, as he does not prescribe the Measure of their Obedience, so in truth was there no occasion for it; for let it once be granted by any Man, that he is the Subject of this or that Government, it follows of course, that he must yield the same Obedience as other Subjects do, and which by the respective Constitution is required of him. In short, the Law will tell all Men what Subjection is due from them; thither then must we go for the Rule or Measure of our Obedience; that is a Matter the Gospel meddles not with, it enquires not into Men's civil Rights, it adds nothing to them, nor takes any thing from them, agreeably to what this Apostle himself says, 1 Cor. vii. 21. *Art thou called being a Servant? care not for it. Let every Man wherein he is called, therein abide with God. For he that is called in the Lord, being a Servant, is the Lord's free Man: Likewise also he that is called being free, is Christ's Servant.* With respect to all these things the Gospel leaves Men where it found them; and therefore what is here said by St. *Paul* of Obedience to Governors, is not to make Men more subject than they were before, but to let them know that they are not by embracing the Gospel less so, or in any measure dispensed with from the Subjection they were before under.

But as the Gospel takes nothing from the Right the Prince has to the Obedience of his Subjects, so neither does it take away all Right the Subjects are possessed of. Such Rights in some degree or other all Subjects have; those particularly under the *Roman* Government, who were *Civitati donati*, had great ones; this he, who

was himself in that Sense a *Roman*, well understood, and upon proper Occasions insisted on them in his own Defence. Thus *Acts* xxii. 25. when they bound him by Order of the chief Captain *Lysias*, he said to the Centurion, *Is it lawful for you to scourge a Man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?* Upon which they who were to have examined him by scourging, departed from him; the chief Captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a *Roman*, because he had bound him, and loosed him from his Bands. And in the same manner he declares the Privileges he is entitled to as a *Roman*, upon a like Occasion, in the 16th Chapter. And in the 25th Chapter, when the *Jews* would have put him to Death, no Man, says he, may deliver me unto them, I appeal unto *Cæsar*.

Indeed, as *St. Paul* does not here determine the Measures of Obedience, so neither could he, since that depends upon the particular Constitution of every Government, and therefore what would be Disobedience in a Subject under one Government, might not be so in another; nor is it always the same in the same Government, since by the insensible Alterations that are made in length of Time in Things of this Nature, new Privileges are acquired, or old ones lost. The Result from which is, that the Measure of Obedience in every Government is the Law and Constitution of that Government, and that only, and not the Scriptures, where there is neither Precept nor Example that obliges in this point; Precept there is none 'tis plain, if this in the Text be not one; nor can any Scripture-Example with respect to Government be binding; since the Law of one Government is no Rule to another: Much less can a Government two or three thousand Years ago established in an *Eastern* Country, any way affect or prescribe to a Government in the *Western* Parts of the World, at so great a distance of Place, as well as Time. I shall only add, that all the *Eastern* Countries were strangely disposed to Servitude, as is remarked by

many of the *Roman* Writers *; whereas the *Western* Parts of the World always preserved such a Liberty as distinguished Subjects from Slaves. The Truth is, the *Eastern* Governments were the most antient, and the most antient, as being in the Infancy and Ignorance of the World, were the most simple, the wise modelling of Government being a Work of Time, and the Effect of long Experience. Hence it came to pass, that the first Governments were by single Persons, and these Persons absolute, and unlimited by any Laws. This exposed the *Eastern* People to be more Slaves than those in the *Western* Parts; and they were perhaps represented to be more so than they really were, by the *Roman* Writers, who were such Enemies to the regal Governments then in use, that it is familiar with them to treat all Subjection to them, as Servitude. But however that be, one Government can't prescribe to another, nor are the political Laws of the *Jews*, when under a regal Government, any way obligatory to the Prince or People of this Nation, or declarative of their respective Rights.

It would be needless to spend so many Words in so plain a Case, but that this Text has been so often made use of, to assert to Princes an absolute and unlimited Power to oppress their Subjects in the most arbitrary manner, in Defiance of the Constitution; and Men will arrogate to the Study of *Divinity*, what so plainly belongs to the Profession of the *Law*. I do not say this to reproach those who led the way to this Abuse; it was very natural in a loyal Clergy, who had seen both Church and State ruined together with their Prince in the Civil Wars, to which no Persons had contributed, more than

* Syri & Asiatici Græci — *levissima genera hominum & servituti nata.* Liv. l. 36. c. 17. *Judæis & Syris, Nationibus natis servituti.* Cic. de Prov. Consul. c. 5. *Dum Assyrios penes Medosque & Persas Oriens fuit, despectissima pars servientium.* (Judæi) Tac. Hist. l. 5. c. 8. See Grot. de Jur. B. & P. l. 1. c. 3. 20. 1. & c. 4. 7. 5. where he quotes these and other Passages to the same purpose.

the seditious Preachers of those Times, who prostituted the most holy Religion to carry on the most wicked and unrighteous Designs ; it was very natural, I say, and very excuseable in those who had seen these Calamities, and had themselves, in their Persons or Relations, been great Sufferers, to run into the opposite Extreme, and think they could never go too far in pressing the Duty of Obedience, to prevent a Relapse into Principles that produc'd so much Mischief. But Experience has shewn, that Extreme also to have its Inconveniences, and that a Nation may be ruined by asserting to the Prince a Power unknown to the Laws, as well as to the People a lawless Liberty. And therefore it is no longer now excuseable to continue in the same Mistake, and to give this or any other Text such an Interpretation, as is inconsistent with our Laws, and destroys our Constitution, and makes no Distinction between arbitrary Governments, and legal ones.

The Law in all Governments is the Rule of the Subjects Obedience, and whatever Right that gives them, they lose none of it by being *Christians*. This is a most undoubted Truth ; and it is as certain, that as they lose no Right, so they acquire none. As the first of these ought to be well considered by Governors, that they may not think Christianity gives them a Right to enslave or oppress a free People ; so ought the other to be by Subjects, that they may not be seduced into Sedition and Rebellion, by enthusiastick Spirits, who think Dominion founded in Grace, and that they have a Right to demolish any Government they don't like, to set up the Kingdom of *Christ*. This Nation, in the Compass of fifty Years, felt the Mischief of both these Errors ; and it is to be hoped, what we have suffered from the Madness of the People on one hand, and from the illegal and arbitrary Attempts of the Government on the other, will make us wiser for the future, and dread those fatal Extremes, which have cost so dear ; or at least, that Scrip-

ture will be no more employ'd to countenance and justify the Injustice and Violence of either Side.

The Law must be the Rule to both, and where that is deficient, the Interpreters of it will have recourse to the Law of Nature, and Nations, from which *Christianity* in nothing derogates. By these Laws a Government has no more Right to inflict an unjust Punishment, than it has to command an unjust Action; nor any Power to destroy the Rights of a free People; which would little deserve the Name of Rights, if there were in no case a Right to defend them. Nothing seems to be a more certain Truth, than that all Power is a Trust, and a Trust may be abused to that degree, as wholly to pervert and destroy the Design of it; and when that is the case, 'tis to little purpose to tell a Nation, they are bound to abide by it, and be passive under it. The great Argument against their Self-defence is, that it introduces *Anarchy*, which Government was intended to prevent: Which is very true; but it will be hard from thence to persuade a Nation, who see themselves upon the Brink of Ruin from the Oppression of their Governors, that it is not more eligible to risk the Inconveniences of a short *Anarchy*, than patiently submit, and by their Submission entail certain Slavery on themselves and their Posterity. No civilized Nations have ever acted such a Part, and from thence it may well be presum'd, never will. But this gives no Right to private Subjects to disturb the publick Peace, and have recourse to Arms, because they think themselves injured, or perhaps really are. Legal Remedies they may endeavour, but if such cannot be had, they ought for their own Sakes, and the Sake of the Publick, whose Welfare they are bound to support, of two Evils to chuse the least; and if they do not, will, 'tis more than probable, pay dearly for it, and lose their Lives in an ignominious Death, by taking irregular Methods to preserve, or recover, something of little Value in Comparison of what they are like to lose for it.

Indeed

Indeed the Advantages under almost any Government are so many, and the designed Injuries private Men receive from it are so few, that Obedience and a quiet Submission is in the general due from them to all Governors; who are presum'd to intend the Good of the People, and not knowingly or willingly to invade or violate their Rights. And when they do so, it must be to a very great degree, and the Grievance must be general, the Fundamentals of Government must be obstinately invaded, before it can be more eligible upon the whole to oppose such Violence by Force, rather than submit to it; and whoever thinks otherwise, and acts accordingly, will be adjudged by the major part, who do not think with him, to be in the wrong, and what he perhaps calls Zeal for the Constitution, will undergo the Punishment and Infamy of Rebellion. But this, as I have said, is a Point the New Testament meddles not with, it prescribes only for private Life, and teaches Men how to be wise to Salvation: It meddles not with civil Rights, nor with Matters of Government; it leaves all these things where it found them, and takes notice of Governors no otherwise, than to put *Christians* in mind of their Duty to them; from which they are by their Religion in no degree exempted or dispensed with, and by that means to remove the greatest and most fatal Prejudice that the then Governors could have to them.

Having thus set this Text, and the several Parts of it, in the clearest Light I can, and shewn what I take to be the just and only true Meaning of it, I should now come to the Application I propos'd to make of it to our present Circumstances, but I must leave that to another Opportunity.

Now to God the Father, with the Son, and Holy Spirit, &c.

P O S T S C R I P T.

I Take the Advantage of a spare Page to give the Reader a remarkable Passage from *Sleidan's* Commentaries concerning the Sentiments of the Great *Luther* upon the Subject of *Resistance*. The first *Reformers*, to avoid the Imputation of Sedition for their Opposition to the Papal Power, and to procure to themselves the Protection of the Civil Power against it, were very zealous in asserting the *Rights* of Princes, and carried the Duty of *Submission* to the greatest Height; in which none went farther than *Luther* himself, in a Piece he wrote in 1525. on occasion of the *Rustic War*; but in 1531. when the Princes who favoured the *Reformation*, found it necessary for their Defence to form the *Smalcaldic League*, in a Consultation of Lawyers and Divines, he owned himself convinced, that *Resistance* was lawful in some Cases. *Sleidan's* Words, l. 8. are these, *Prius quàm fœdus iniretur, in consilium adhibiti fuerunt non jure consulti modò, sed theologi quoque. Lutherus autem semper docuerat, magistratui non esse resistendum, & extabat ejus hac de re libellus: Cum autem in hac deliberatione periti juris docerent legibus esse permissum, resistere nonnunquam, & nunc in eum casum, de quo leges inter alia mentionem faciant, rem esse deductam ostenderent, Lutherus ingenuè profitetur, se nescivisse hoc licere: Et quia leges politicas evangelium non impugnet aut aboleat, uti semper docuerit, deinde, quoniam hoc tempore tam dubio tanque formidoloso multa possint accidere, sic ut non modo jus ipsum, sed conscientiæ quoque vis atque necessitas arma nobis porrigat, defensionis causa fœdus iniri posse dicit, sive Cæsar ipse, sive quis alius fortè bellum ejus nomine faciat.* The Example of the *Maccabees* was too illustrious, to think it could be forgotten on such an Occasion; whose Conduct in throwing off the oppressive Government of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, is never censured or condemned by *Christ* or his Apostles, but rather seems to be commended and approved, *Heb. xi. 34, &c.* as well as in the Books of the *Maccabees*, and other *Jewish Writings*; asaffording many glorious Instances of the Power of Faith. For since some of the Characters agree to none more than them, and some solely to them, there can be no good Reason to think the Writer had not them in his View, as well as other of the antient Worthies; especially since in this whole Passage he seems to have had his Eye fixed on the 2^d Chapter of the 1st Book of their History.



S E R M O N II.

R O M. XII. 1, 2.

*Let every Soul be subject unto the higher Powers.
For there is no Power but of God: The Powers that be, are ordained of God.*

Whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation.



HAVE shewn in the Explication I have given of these Words, that the Duty of Obedience to the Magistrate is by St. *Paul* founded in the divine Right of Government, and that there is no Power or Government but from God, and that the several Powers or Governments that *be*, that is, that are in being, *are ordained of God*; and that this is not any new Doctrine, peculiar to the *Christian* Religion, much less to any one Teacher of it, but has always been the Sense of the wisest Men in all Nations, both

Jews and *Gentiles*, who have all acknowledged the Original of Government to be divine; which is indeed the Voice of Nature, and from thence came to be the Sense of all Nations. Nor did they think that Governments had their Original only from God; in the whole Course and Progress of them they were universally thought to be the particular Object of his Providence; that he always rules in the Kingdoms of Men, and disposes of them as he will. For as all Nations have acknowledged an overruling Providence, so they saw nothing so worthy of its Care as Government, since the Peace and Happiness of Mankind depends upon it, and can't be maintained without it. The Reasons which convinced them that Government was of divine Institution, the same Reasons prov'd with equal Force, that the Disposition of particular Governments was also in God; and that therefore, as there is *no Power but of God*, so the Powers any where, and at any time in Being, are ordained by him. From whence it necessarily follows, that all Persons are obliged to yield Subjection and Obedience to the Governments they live under for *Conscience sake*, as they would not be guilty of fighting against God, as well as Man, and resisting the divine Will.

And this I have shewn was the single Point *St. Paul* was concerned to prove; he was not arguing with Persons, who owned the Authority of the *Roman* Government, and excepted only to the Person governing, either as to the Legality of his Title, or the Equity and Justice of his Administration; but with those who asserted to themselves a Liberty and Exemption from that Government in general, in whatever Hands, and however administered. His Design was to oppose the wild Opinions of the Followers of *Judas of Galilee*, (which had very probably infected many *Jewish* Christians also,) who maintained it to be unlawful and sinful in the Sight of God to acknowledge any Government; or to receive any Person for their Lord, but God himself. For these Men did not except
against

against Obedience to one Emperor rather than another, because this governed better, or had a better Title; for that Sect began in the Reign of *Augustus*, who was one of the best Emperors the *Roman* Government was ever blest with; but they would no more submit to him, than to *Caligula* or *Nero*, who were some of the worst: Nor did they except against the Title of *Augustus*, because his Power was raised upon the Ruins of the *Commonwealth*, and the Liberty of the People. Had the *Taxation* that gave Occasion to this new Sect, been made before that Change in the *Roman* Government, the same mad Zeal for Liberty would have carried these Men into the avowing of the same Principles; and they would no more have submitted to the Power of the *Senate*, than they did to that of the Emperor. Now in Opposition to the extravagant Opinions and Practices of such Men, the Apostle declares that *all Governments are of God*, and therefore all Persons obliged to submit to them; and that they who will not, ought to look on what they suffer for their Disobedience, as the just Punishment of God himself upon them, tho' inflicted by the Hand of Men.

This I have shewn at large to be the Meaning of this Text by a particular and distinct Explication of every part of it. I come now to consider the Application of it to our selves, and shall from thence endeavour to convince you of the Sin and Folly of those Plots and Conspiracies that have been form'd against the present Government, not only to disturb its Peace, but in order to a total Subversion of it; which the more you are convinced of, the more careful will you be, not to be seduced by factious Men into Attempts, which can probably end in nothing but in bringing down the divine Vengeance on your selves, as they would Devastation and Destruction on your Country, and on every thing that is dear to you, should they succeed. Now if *the Powers that be*, that is, that are at any time in Being, *are ordained of God*, then the present Government of this Nation is his Ordinance,

nance, as truly as any other. For the Apostle's Assertion, I have shewn, is general, not confined to Time or Place, it being not peculiar to himself, and to the then State of Things, but the Voice of Nature, and the Sense of all Nations. From whence it follows that the Assertion is as true now as it was then, and consequently the Duty built on it of universal and perpetual Obligation: And therefore in virtue of what is here enjoined, Obedience is due by divine Right, as well as by the Laws of the Land, to the present Government established in this Kingdom.

Indeed whoever considers in what manner the Crown was settled on the Family of his present Majesty, with how much Deliberation, with how free a Consent of the States of the Kingdom, and with how chearful and universal an Approbation in the Body of the People of what their Representatives had done; whoever considers how solemnly his Majesty's Title has been recognized in Parliament; how much was done to secure the Succession to him in the last Reign, when the Nation enjoyed the most perfect Tranquillity at Home, and was in the greatest Glory by the Success of its Arms abroad; whoever, I say, considers impartially, in what manner the Crown was settled on the King and his Family, and compares it with the manner in which most Governments have been begun, or with those Interruptions and Alterations that have happened in them, to which the Powers now governing owe their Titles, will see abundant Reason to own, that the present Government is in a more particular manner *the Ordinance of God*: Since it is impossible to conceive a Settlement more peaceably, more deliberately, more freely made, or upon greater Necessity, or more universally approved; a Settlement not only acquiesc'd in by the People, but made by their own free Choice, and acknowledged by all other Nations in Alliance with us. If this be not the Work of God, no Man living will be able to say what is.

But

But if the present Government had none of these Advantages that so eminently distinguish it from others, considered only upon the same foot they are, 'tis as truly as any of them, the *Ordinance of God*; there is nothing to exclude it from any Acknowledgments of that sort, the other Governments of the World are entitled to. For the Gospel, as I have observed before, does not concern it self with the Titles of Princes; whoever are in quiet Possession of a Government, and are acknowledged and submitted to by the Body of the People, there is no room for refusing Submission to such Governors, upon pretence of a disputed Title, from this or any Text in Scripture: And therefore all Persons, if we will hear *St. Paul*, are obliged in Conscience to submit to the present Establishment, with due Allowance to the Scruples of those, who think themselves precluded by their own voluntary Act, and in virtue of the Oaths it found them under. A great deal might be said to shew the Invalidity of such Obligations in such a Case as this; since thereby they bind themselves against God as well as Man, and deny his Right to dispose of Kingdoms as he will, whose sole Prerogative it is. But not to enter into that Dispute, which affects but a very small Number; however *they* may scruple the Acknowledgment of another Person to be their *rightful and lawful* Prince, yet even these Persons must acknowledge themselves obliged to a quiet and peaceable Submission to the Powers now set over them, in return for the Protection they enjoy from them. And they who will not forbear entering into Measures to disturb, or subvert the Government, or will not give all reasonable Security of a peaceable Behaviour, can with no reason expect to enjoy the Benefits of it in common with their fellow Subjects; or complain, if the Government should think fit to take the properest Measures to secure it self against them. For whether Obedience be due or not, to a Government when it ceases to protect Men, no body ever doubted but Protection on the part
of

of the Prince, gave him a Right to the Obedience of the People.

But to leave these Men, who are now very few, and who may perhaps, most of them, be presumed to act upon a Principle of Conscience, and have not by a turbulent Behaviour provoked the Government against them; 'tis inconceivable, how those who never acknowledged any other Prince, nor were ever under any personal Ties or Oaths whatever; who were either unborn, or but Children at the *Revolution*; it is not, I say, conceivable, how they can plead Conscience for refusing Obedience to the present Government; much less, how they can justify even to themselves the going into Plots and Conspiracies against it, in breach of so clear a Command for all Persons to be subject *to the higher Powers*. Sensible People will impute such a Conduct to Party-Rage and Passion; to Resentment and Discontent; not to Conscience and a tender Regard to what they believe to be their Duty, where there do not appear most evident Reasons to the contrary. And if such Men feel from the Government a Severity proportioned to the Provocation they give, they must blame themselves, and not the Government, which has shewn an unparallel'd Tenderness and Indulgence towards them, and has used such a Connivance, as is hardly consistent with its own Safety and Defence.

But neither is it these Men I now address to. My Business at present is with those who have owned the present Government, and by the most solemn Engagements bound themselves to be faithful and true to it; whom therefore, if they act a false and perfidious part, all the World must allow to be without Excuse. For what is it can be said for them? Have they Scruples about the Title by which his Majesty holds the Crown? Why did they by their Oaths acknowledge him to be their *lawful* and *rightful* Governor? If it was lawful to take such Oaths, it can't be lawful not to keep them; and all such who act against the Government in direct Violation of them,

them, add the Guilt of the blackest Perjury to the other Sins, such Acts involve them in. Besides the Oath of *Allegiance*, by which they promise to be *faithful and good Subjects* to his present Majesty, they do by another Oath acknowledge the *Right* to be in him, and solemnly declare they believe there is none in any other; and what is still more material, they do therein promise to defend the Crown as now settled, to the utmost of their Power, against all Persons whatsoever: They do not oblige themselves only to do nothing directly or indirectly to the Prejudice of the Government; they do not only engage not to enter into any Plots and Conspiracies against it; but to discover any such Designs, that they shall any way come to the Knowledge of, and give all the Assistance they can to preserve and support the present Establishment against all who shall endeavour the Subversion of it. And this they declare to be their Resolution in the plain obvious Sense of the Words, without any Equivocation or mental Reservation, upon the Word and Faith of a *Christian*. What can excuse a Man who has thus bound himself, and yet acts the direct contrary to every part of these Engagements? I have never heard of any Excuse, but what is really an Aggravation of the Crime.

They say, these Oaths were forced upon them, and that the Perjury therefore lies upon the Imposers, and not on those who take them. This is so vile a Principle, so impudent an Excuse, that it unhinges all publick Faith at once, and shews those that make it, devoid of all Morality, as well as of all Sense of Shame. This is beyond any thing that *Jesuitism* has produced; and makes the most solemn Ties that the Wisdom of Man can invent, no Ties at all. How would the primitive *Christians*, how would our Forefathers in later Times have abhorred such monstrous Prevarication in the Sight, and with the Name of God? Had they understood this Doctrine, had they thought the least degree of Insincerity lawful,

ful, they needed not have undergone those cruel Persecutions, which were inflicted on such Numbers of them. They might have sworn by the *Genius* of the Emperor, or *sacrificed*, or complied with any other Test required of them, and have excused it from the Necessity there was of doing so to save themselves, and have charged all the Sin of such Facts upon the Imposers. But they knew too well, how frivolous, how wicked, how execrable before God such a Defence would be; they knew no Pretence of Force could excuse an Act which they had it always in their Power to refuse; and were so far from thinking any thing they could suffer from Men, a Necessity that would justify their acting against their Consciences, that they looked on Death it self in such a Cause as a light Affliction.

But I need not go back to such remote Times, to shew how scandalous such a Plea is; if our Predecessors in either of the *Popish* Reigns, with which this Nation has been oppressed since the Reformation, had been acquainted with this Doctrine, the *Protestant* Religion had been long since destroyed by their Compliances to the Power of those arbitrary Princes. But indeed *Protestants* have in all Countries been so far from avowing so infamous a Principle, that even *Papists* have abhorred it: Even the *Jesuits*, the great Corrupters of Morality, and of all Principles, have not dared openly to espouse it. So that this Plea, instead of lessening the Guilt of such perjured Men, is really a vast Addition to it. And yet what else have they to say in their Defence? For they renounce all Right to *Resistance* upon pretence of Male-Administration; that is a Principle they always disown, and impute it as an impious Doctrine to those that differ from them. But whatever their Opinion be of the Nature and Measures of Obedience, admit they avowed the Principles they disclaim, it would on this Occasion do them no Service. For whatever Right Male-Administration can give Subjects to oppose their Prince, there can
be

be no such Right exercised, where there is no such Administration that oppresses them: Which God, be thanked, is our Case.

'Tis our Happiness to be under a Prince who has no Interest separate from that of his People, who makes the known Laws the Rule and Measure of his Government, who knows no Greatness but in the Prosperity of his Subjects, and who is perfectly free from those turbulent Passions that give so much Disturbance to the World, by which the Peace and Quiet, the Rights, and Liberties and Properties, the Religion and Conscience of Mankind are sacrificed to the Lusts and Humours of a few. A Prince, who, during the course of his Reign, has been so far from stretching the Prerogative of the Crown, or from the least Attempt upon our Liberties, that he has voluntarily offered to part with a very considerable Branch of his own Power, if his People thought it would more effectually secure their Liberties: In a word, we are happy in a Prince who is so far from affecting arbitrary Sway in a legal and limited Government, that he would not use such a Power where he might rightfully have done it: He governed his *hereditary* Dominions with as much Equity and Justice, as if he had been tied up by the strictest and severest Laws. So that there is not the least Pretence for Disobedience in the Subject under colour of any illegal Administration in the Prince. No Law for the Good of the People has been attempted to be repealed, or set aside; no new ones offered to him have been refused; nor has any dispensing Power been assumed, or any thing done in any part of the Administration, that has not been with the Advice, or has not had the Approbation of Parliament.

But this, I am sensible, instead of keeping these Men in their Obedience, is that which at present is the chief Provocation to them to throw it off. They know nothing from within can destroy the present Establishment, so long as the King is supported by a dutiful and faithful Parliament; and such an one, very much contrary

to their Hopes, they see the Kingdom again happy in. This has made them precipitate themselves into the most desperate Measures, to prevent if possible their meeting. However feasible a Rebellion may be against a Prince who stands alone, unsupported by a Parliament, or distressed by a disaffected and disloyal one, there is little Hopes such Attempts can succeed against the united Power of both, which puts the King in Possession of all the Wealth and Strength of his People, so far as the Defence of his Person and Government shall make it necessary.

But what leaves them still more without Excuse, as Men of the most seditious Principles have no colour to complain of any illegal or arbitrary Proceedings, by which either their Religion or Liberties are endangered, under his Majesty's just and mild Administration; so is there no room for any such Jealousies in the Prospect they have of those who shall succeed him. No Apprehensions of that kind can have place, but where the reigning Prince wants a Son, or has such an one that it had been better for the Nation he had been without one, either from his wanting the Virtues requisite to make a good Governor, or from his being ill affected to the national Religion, or in Danger of being perverted from it by a Princess in his Bosom bred in *Popish* Superstition, or, lastly, that he is without hopes of Issue by her; which in course plays the Succession into *Popish* Hands, who in view of it will always be giving us Disturbances, and concerting the best Measures, that they may not be disappointed. But 'tis our Happiness under the present Establishment to be free from all the uneasy Apprehensions that any of these Cases could create to make us fear that the Tranquillity and Safety we now enjoy, will not be lasting.

God has given his Majesty a Son, adorned with all the Qualities that are requisite to make a great Prince, and a happy People; who is full of Honour and Integrity, and abhors nothing so much as Falshood and Injustice; who is eminent for Fortitude and Temperance;

who is well affected to the established Religion; who has nothing foreign in him but his Birth, and is remarkable for his Esteem and Love of *Englishmen*; in a word, who treads in the Steps, and inherits the Virtues of his royal Father. And which is still a greater Security to our future Happiness, his Royal Highness wants not (such was his Father's Care) a Consort worthy of himself, who is distinguished by all the amiable Qualities, that are the Ornament and Glory of her Sex; who shines in every Relation of Life an exemplary Pattern, unsullied by any Blemish, of any sort; and who, to complete her Character, is so good a *Protestant*, and so truly an Enemy to the Superstition and Tyranny of *Popery*, that as the Splendor and Pageantry of it could not allure her, so neither could the Title of one Crown, and the Prospect of another tempt her, to renounce or to dissemble the Religion, which an excellent Understanding and well informed Conscience had approved: So that our Religion is perfectly safe on that side, from whence our greatest Apprehensions of *Popery* have formerly come. But that is not all the Happiness we have in view; we are not only happy in the personal Virtues of their Royal Highnesses; they have blest the Royal Family, and in that the Nation, with a numerous and beautiful Issue of the greatest Hopes, who are the Love and Delight of this Age, and will be the Support and Glory of the next. This is the King, this the Family, these wicked Men would depose, and set aside; (I might say murder and assassinate; for it is known that even such villainous Measures have not been disdained) a Family from whence there is all the Hopes of a Succession of national Blessings for Ages to come, that could be desired, and far beyond what this Nation in almost any Age has seen.

So that they who would overturn this Government, have no Pretence at present or in Prospect for it, but what in truth should be a Reason to them for not attempting it. So devoid are they of any real and justifi-

ble Causes for going into such Measures, and breaking thro' those Obligations to Obedience, with which both by the Laws of God and Man they are so strictly bound.

And this may shew both the Sin and Folly of such Attempts. But the Monstrousness of both will more fully appear, if we take a nearer View, either of the End they aim at, or the Means by which they hope to compass it. Whom they are to depose, what Family they are to set aside, we have already seen, a Family from which we may promise our selves a constant Succession of all the Blessings a Nation can enjoy, and which deserves well to be considered, the only Family that can derive these Blessings to us. So that if these Men could succeed in their Designs, it would not be to exchange one Prince, or one Family, for another, who would make us, if not more happy, at least as much so as we are already: Tho' even such a Design would be extremely wicked and absurd, yet it were well for us, if that could be hoped for from the present Conspiracy, not to be put by it into a worse Condition than we were before. But what makes their Attempt infinitely more inexcusable, it is to place a *Popish Pretender* upon the Throne of these Kingdoms, and to entail on the Nation those Miseries, which they have been at the greatest Expence of Blood and Treasure to secure themselves against.

Popery in the Throne, is an Expression that carries in it every thing that can be terrible to *Protestants* and *Englishmen*; and yet it does not express half the Miseries, that in the present Circumstances it would bring upon us. *Popery* in its best Shape, and mildest Form, is very dreadful to a *Protestant* People: What then will it be, when it comes upon us arm'd with all the Rage that Hunger, and Revenge, and Despair, can inspire into it? What Bounds can be set, what Temper or Moderation can be expected upon the return of a *Superstition, whose Mercies are cruel*, after an Exile of so many Years? What Justice, what Equity can this Nation hope for from an in-

sulting

sulting Enemy, flush'd with Success, after so many cruel Disappointments; and whose inbred Hatred to us, has so many ways been more and more heightned and inflamed? Can *Popery*, that could not spare us, nor keep any Terms or Faith with us, when it reigned in a Prince of otherwise no ill Qualities, and who had the greatest Obligations to the Nation for their Fidelity and Attachment to him; could *Popery* be false, and cruel, and insupportable to us, in the Breast of such a Prince; and can we hope for any other Usage from it, than what is dictated by Hatred and Revenge, when the same Superstition has it again in its Power to trample on us, in the Hands of one, who is not only a Stranger to our Constitution, and without all Obligations to the Nation, but who has been bred in the greatest Aversion to it, and who may be presumed to have been taught no one thing so much, as how to take an ample Revenge of it for the Exclusion of him, and effectually to subdue all future Opposition, to whatever his Resentment or Religion can prompt him to Attempt?

Nothing can be conceived so terrible to this Nation, so destructive of its Religion and Liberties, as to place *Popery*, thus enraged, in the Throne of these Kingdoms. And yet this is the noble End proposed by the present Conspiracy: 'Tis not to secure our Laws, or Religion, or Liberties, but most effectually to destroy them, and enslave us to the worst of Governments, to a Tyranny spiritual as well as civil. For to do them Justice, they do not pretend, the Prince they would impose on us, is a *Protestant*, or inclined to favour our Religion, or that he has promised to support it; no, on the contrary they confess, he is a most zealous *Papist*, and that none of those who undertook his Conversion, have been able to make the least Impression on him. They have indeed endeavoured to amuse the Country in some Places with the Hopes of securing their Religion, by pretending they do not design to bring in the *Pretender*, but his
Son.

Son, a Child not two Years old. A hopeful Scheme! But can any body that thinks believe them? Can it be thought that the *Pretender* would be so contented? Can it be believed, that if the Son were once here, the Father would not soon follow? What should hinder it, if the Family now reigning were removed? Or is it possible this Nation in such Circumstances can subsist under a long Regency? Who shall prevent Factions among themselves, who shall supply the Vacancies that happen in them, or who shall at first name them? And if the Child they are Regents for, should die, as all Children are subject to a thousand Accidents, what must the Nation do then? Must they then call in the *Pretender* himself, or must he needs have another Son for us? Or shall we return to the Family they would expel? This is all so impracticable, that they must be very ignorant indeed that can be thus imposed on. If this Family be set aside, we must have *Popery* or nothing, bare-faced *Popery*, in the most frightful Circumstances it can possibly be attended with. Men must have a very good Opinion of themselves, or a very mean one of their fellow Subjects, if they think the Generality of the Nation can be wrought on to engage in, or favour such a wicked and ruinous Design, in which it is impossible to hope for any Good, or the Absence of any one Evil, that can concur to make a Nation compleatly miserable.

But let us now take a View of the Means that are to bring about this great Design, and we shall find the End and the Means just of a piece, equally wicked and absurd. They are to entail Slavery upon the Nation for all Time to come, by involving it at present in all the Calamities that an unnatural Rebellion can bring upon it. They will not indeed own this, and are in Appearance so sanguine as to tell People, they can bring about this glorious End without any Effusion of Blood; but how can we believe them? Why they tell us, the *Revolution* was so brought about. Vain Men! Because the *Revolution*
by

by the wonderful Providence of God on the Measures of the late King, concerted with the greatest Wisdom, and for the best of Causes, to save the Religion and Liberties of the Nation, when in the most imminent Danger, and upon the Brink of Ruin; because this *Revolution* was so happily effected, therefore they think they may hope for the same Success in the Prosecution of the most unjust and wicked Enterprize: As if because God wonderfully blest a Design to save our Religion and Liberties, therefore he will as wonderfully prosper one design'd for the certain Ruin of them. But without considering God's more immediate Providence in bringing about the *Revolution*, had that unhappy Prince, who was driving so fast to settle *Popery* in this Nation, had he a Parliament willing and ready to assist him, in that ruinous Enterprize? Were either the Nobility, or Gentry, or Clergy, engaged in those Interests? Had he any Wealth or Strength of his own, in any other Country to support him? Had he an Army to depend on, that either would, or could lawfully defend him in his Invasions on the Constitution? Were there nothing else, these Considerations alone are sufficient to shew, that the present Conspirators have no room to hope for the same Success as happened then.

But the Vanity and Emptiness of such Hopes will better appear, if we compare what was attempted then, with what is attempted now. There was a wise and great Prince at the Head of the Design, that brought about the *Revolution*, supported by a good Body of Troops, strengthened by many and powerful Alliances, famed for his Virtue and Courage, for his Love of Liberty and Zeal for the *Protestant* Religion, personally known and belov'd by the best of the Nobility and Gentry of the Nation, and married to a Princess, who was next in Succession to the Crown, and entirely possess'd of the Hearts and Affections of the People. A Design thus conducted, in such Hands, so supported, and in Defence of so good a Cause, did

did succeed beyond all Expectation; therefore—therefore what? Why therefore, a wicked Conspiracy, to serve the worst of Causes, unsupported by any real Strength either at Home or Abroad, espoused by no Prince, detested by the main Body of the Nobility, Gentry, and Clergy, and which will doubtless appear to be so by the People also, when their Apprehensions of *Popery* shall bring them to their Senses again, and they shall be convinced these Designs of their Enemies are real; such a Conspiracy, in such unpromising Circumstances, must succeed, as wonderfully, as the *Revolution* did! How much more Reason have the Conspirators, and those that wish well to them, to apprehend that their present Attempt will succeed no better than other Plots usually do, of which scarce one in a thousand takes effect! How vainly have they ever since the *Revolution* kept up the Hopes of their Party, with ridiculous Expectations of a Change from some new Project, that could not miscarry? Scarce a Year has passed, in which they have not vainly flatter'd themselves with such Delusions. But can they so soon forget the last Rebellion? Or have they any reasonable Ground to hope they shall succeed better now? Yes, the Experience of that has made them wiser; they can take their Measures better now, and prevent the fatal Miscarriages that happened then. Then they began their Work in the remoter Parts of the Kingdom, which gave the Government time to provide against them, and take those Measures that soon put an end to that good Design. But that the like Disaster might not again happen, they resolved now to begin their Play in the Center of the Kingdom, and to strike their Blow home at once. *London* is to be the Scene; the Tower, the City, the Bank, the Ministers, the General, the Prince, the King, are all to be seized at once. And if this first Stroke could succeed, they had then a sure Game; Insurrections were immediately to break out in all Parts, and the whole Kingdom, they were confident, would follow the Fate of the Capital, and be their own.

But do these Men really think, such Plots are so easily executed? Can such Designs be formed without many being privy to them? Or can they consistently with that, hope for such a Secrecy, as is necessary? If the chief Operators may be confided in, can the inferior Tools be trusted? The Directors may perhaps have Art enough to secure themselves from Conviction, but 'tis morally impossible to secure their Plot from a Discovery. But if they could, could they flatter themselves, that a Scheme consisting of so many Parts would succeed, when a small Miscarriage, or Delay, in any one Part, would endanger the whole? Do they think the King's personal Interest in the Nation to be so little, or Men's Concern for their Religion and Liberties to be so languid, and remiss? Do they think the Men of Fortune and Estate, who have been always in the *Protestant* Interest, so devoid of Zeal or Strength, that a Nation can in an instant be over-run by a few discontented, ambitious Men, who mean nothing but their own private Ends, or to repair their broken Fortunes? Who have nothing to recommend them to the Affection or Esteem of the Nation, at least, not preferably to others of their own Rank; and who have nothing else to depend on to support them in their wicked Enterprize, but the Disaffection of the meanest of the People, and of such as have ruined themselves in the late general Calamity? Which, tho' it happened in his Majesty's Reign, can't with any Justice be imputed to him, and might as well have happened in the Reign of any other Prince; being in truth little other than an *epidemic*, or national Madness, which we greedily ran into after the Example of a neighbour Nation; which in reason should have been not an Example, but a Warning to us, not to tread in the same Steps. Is it imaginable, a Nation can so easily be overturned by a Handful of factious Men, destitute of foreign Help, and depending only on such a Disaffection, as could last no longer, than till the People could be disabused?

The most probable Issue of their Conspiracy, humanly speaking, would have been the same, as it was before: The utmost Success they could reasonably hope for, must have been the involving of the Nation in a long civil War; which is so dreadful a Scene, a Scene of so much Horror and Confusion, that nothing can make the Thought of it tolerable, but the absolute Ruin of the Nation, without the running of such a Risk to save it. Could I infuse into you a short View of the late Civil War, with which this Nation was so long distracted; were it possible for you to have but for one Hour a full and lively Sense of that infinite Variety of Miseries this Kingdom then suffered, there would need no other Argument to fill you with a just Abhorrence of all such Attempts, as must probably involve you in the same Calamities. But could the Conspirators be as fortunate as they wish to be, you have seen what it is their Design is to end in, in entailing *Popery* and *Slavery* upon a *Protestant* and *free* People.

As the Disaffection of the People is the chief Strength they have to depend on, so it must be confess'd they have not been wanting in their Endeavours to secure that. Hence have proceeded that Swarm of virulent and treasonable Libels, that have of late filled all Places; which both for their Number and their Malice have exceeded all that this Kingdom in peaceable Times hath ever seen. At the Time indeed they were thought to be calculated only to influence the *Elections* then approaching; but the Event has shewn, the Design was deeper laid, and that nothing less was meant than a total Subversion of the Government; which these Libels were to pave the way to. 'Twas for this such a Clamour was raised against the *Quarantain* Bill, and the Minds of the People terrified with such groundless Fears. This Bill, the Conspirators feared, would draw all the Forces of the Kingdom to the Neighbourhood of *London*, which was the most fatal thing could happen for a Plot, of which *London* was to

be the Scene. For this all the Arts of Calumny and Defamation were with incredible Industry employed, to asperse the Government, and render every Part of the Administration odious and contemptible, in hopes the People would be so far infatuated as to join with the Conspirators, or sit still at least, and not be active in opposing them. It was for this the *Hanover* Succession was in so impudent a manner vilified and exposed; for this, the Royal Family, every Branch of it, even the King himself, was traduced with so much Virulence: And a wise, just, and merciful Prince, descended from the noblest Blood in *Europe*, and no way degenerating from the Virtues of his Ancestors, was represented in the falsest and blackest Colours, as devoid of all Virtue and Honour, inglorious both in himself and Family.

Such Usage would have provoked most Princes to the severest Resentments; and nothing seems to have restrained all Appearance of any in his Majesty, so much as the Consciousness of his own Virtue, and that Greatness of Mind, which makes him as insensible of Calumny, as he is fearless of Danger. But the less Resentment he shews himself at such Usage, the greater Indignation should it raise in the Breasts of all good Subjects; who should no more patiently suffer such Injuries done to their Prince, than to themselves. Men of the most moderate Understandings may be sure those Charges are false, which can't be true without supposing their Prince a much worse Man than any of them would be willing to be thought themselves. In general, whatever Imputation can't be true of Persons, without their being a great deal worse Men than we before took them to be, we should always presume is false, till we are very well assured it is not. This is a Justice due to every private Man, much more to Princes, whose Characters, as well as Persons, ought to be sacred: and no Man can be a good Subject, that does not preserve that Reverence and Honour for them: Much less can it consist with our Duty to believe of them things

there is not the least colour for ; things which are not only false, but very grossly so. And in this respect the Conspirators have strangely overshot themselves ; they have not been content to asperse his Majesty and his Government without the least regard to Truth, but have done it in so outrageous a manner, as destroys all kind of Probability ; which People must be very ill Judges of, who can believe the hundredth part of what these Men have told them. The Subversion of the Government appearing now to have been the End which those virulent Tongues and Pens were pointed at, that Consideration will, I hope, prevail with all honest Men for the future to be more than ordinarily careful how they give any Countenance or Credit to them, since they are so full of deadly Poison, and mean nothing less than the Destruction of that Establishment from which our own Safety is inseparable.

What has been said, does, I hope, sufficiently shew both the Sin and Folly of the present execrable Conspiracy ; that the Sin of it is exceeding sinful, and the Folly equal to the Sin. It proposes to it self the worst of Ends, to be compassed by the most wicked of Means, and those most unlikely to succeed. But some Men have so little Sense of Religion, or of the Good of Society, or of the Happiness of their Country, that such Considerations will weigh little with them, if they do not find their own Account in it. They foolishly separate things that are inseparable, and don't care what becomes of the Publick, if they can reap any Advantage to themselves. Let us then go a little farther, and see what those Advantages are that any Men can promise themselves by favouring a Conspiracy that is to end in the Subversion of the Government. What is it they propose to get by it ? Why, *Trade is dead*, and *Taxes are heavy* : Be it so, how will a Change of the Government mend Matters ? Will the Farmer have better Crops, or will his Corn yield a better Price ? Will the Mechanick, or Retailer, have a quicker Vent for their Wares, or be able to sell them at higher Rates,

Rates? Or will Persons of inferior Rank mend their Wages? Will the Clothier find a better Market, will the Merchant be able to take of him greater Quantities, or at a greater Price? In order to this he must have himself a greater Trade abroad: But how will a Change of Government effect that? Will it make foreign Countries lay down their own Manufactures, or will the Numbers of those who take off our Goods increase, or will there be a greater Consumption of them? Or does any thing give Life to Trade, but the Exportations we make? If Trade be in any Branch of it overstocked, or Foreigners have found the way to serve themselves with what they used to take from us, or whatever else occasions Deadness of Trade, a Revolution in the Government can't possibly remove the Cause; and therefore 'tis great Weakness in Men to fancy it will: Tho' by the way, the Complaint it self is at present groundless, the Demand of our Goods from abroad having for some time been very great. Men should not only consider the Evils they feel, but look into the Causes of them, and then they will not impute those things to the Government, which proceed wholly from Causes that have no relation to it, or which, all Circumstances considered, could not be prevented.

And as to Taxes, how do those that complain of them, think a successful Conspiracy would make them easy? Would they destroy publick Credit, and have such a Number of People ruined, as there must be by sinking a Debt of fifty Millions? Which, if their Disaffection did not perpetually put the Government upon extraordinary Expences, we should soon see in a way of being paid. I doubt, they who would have so crying an Injustice committed to lessen Taxes, have little Property of their own to lose. Or have they Land? I would ask them, how they would like to have that taken from them to the same Value; which might be done with equal Justice. But whatever their Judgments, or rather Inclinations, are, they must give

give those who have trusted the Government with their Fortunes for the Defence of the common Cause, leave to differ from them. And if their Properties are secured, Taxes must be continued. So that a Change of Government without a Change of Justice also, will do them no Service. In truth, the Change the Conspirators would make, could not lessen either of these Grievances, but would necessarily increase both; it being impossible Trade can flourish under an arbitrary Government, equally to what it does under a legal one. Nor would the Wants of the Government, that must be fed by Taxes, be less than they are now, but vastly greater, if we consider the starved Condition in which *Popery* must ascend the Throne, and how many Persons and Things there would be to be provided for at the Nation's Expence.

But after all that can be said, many will be so vain as to flatter themselves, that however it fares with others, they at least shall be Gainers by a Change. But how can that possibly be, or what is it they expect? I would beg leave to ask any of these Gentlemen one short Question; Do they hope the Enemies of the Government are many, or few? If they are but few, the Plots against it can't succeed; I will therefore answer for them, that they wish they may be many. But then will not many upon a Change have the same Pretensions to favour with themselves? How then will they divide the Spoil? I fear, where one would be satisfied, a thousand would be discontented; for when every Man is Judge of his own Merit, he will not easily think it just, another should be preferred, while he is neglected.

Besides, these Gentlemen should consider, how many Persons there are who in this Cause have Pretensions infinitely superior to them; how many *English*, *Scots*, and *Irish* there are to be taken care of in the first place, who have all their Lives been following a desperate Cause, and have suffered greatly for it; and are the only People that can justly plead Conscience, and have real Merit? It
will

will, be so impossible to provide for others, that great Numbers even of those, will unavoidably be neglected, and get nothing to repair in any degree their ruined Fortunes. For consider, how poor this new Government will be; what Debts and Arrears are due to *France*, and *Spain*, and *Rome*, all to be paid by a Nation, which if we will believe them, is already exhausted.

So that in the upshot we shall find none more dissatisfied upon a little Trial of a new Government, than those very Persons, who at present are most zealous for it. They will find they have not the Advantages they expected, but will feel in common with others the heavy Evils, which, they say, they did not expect. And if that prove to be the Case, what will they do then? Why, then they will plot, and conspire, and rebel again. I make no doubt they would, tho' they did not tell us so; since it is plain, it is not Conscience, but Passion or Interest that governs them. But first, how is this consistent with their pretended Principles; and their Devotion to the Right Line? Next, how will they effect a Change, or what will they change to? Do they think, if a *Popish* Prince were again upon the Throne, he would not take more effectual Measures to secure himself in it, than the last did? Do they think, he would not profit by the false Steps then made, and mend what in that case was found to be ill judged? Do they think, he would rely on *Passive Obedience* for his Safety, and be so credulous as to believe, that *Nature*, when oppressed, *will not rebel against Principle*, tho' very lavish of its Complements, when there is nothing to suffer? Lastly, do they think he would trust to an Army of *Irish Papists*, and refuse a good Body of foreign Troops from his *Catholick* Allies, who would always be as ready to offer, as he could be to accept them?

These are all very chimerical Fancies; but suppose him weak enough to make the same, or equal, or greater Oversight than were made before, what is it these Men would change to? To what Prince will they apply themselves?

Who

Who will accept the Government of an inconstant, factious, ungovernable People, ruined by their own Follies, and weakened to that Degree, as to be the Scorn of all Nations; without Honour, without Strength, without Union, (the only Thing that can give it Strength) and so distracted by Divisions, as to be an easy Prey to the first Invader? So that nothing can be expected in such a case, but certain, and inevitable, and irrecoverable Ruin. For Strength and Union will in vain be hoped for, though the Prince they are so desirous to have, should for a while govern better, than there is any reason to expect, and should not immediately pursue violent and arbitrary Measures to the Ruin of our religious or civil Rights. For do they think, that while the Crown is worth contending for, the *Illustrious Family* in which it is now settled, will tamely resign their Right? Will he not always have a powerful Rival to alarm him? Will that part of the Nation who are heartily and entirely in that interest, forget their Oaths, and Obligations to support the *Succession*, as now established? Will they patiently live in a perpetual Fear of *Popery* and *arbitrary Power*? Can such a Part be expected from Persons who have always distinguished themselves by their Zeal against them? No, such an Acquiescence, such a Submission is in vain hoped for: Their Hearts and Hands will be always ready to restore a *Protestant Royal Family*, and they can never be without good Hopes of succeeding. So that could those Men have their Wish, a Claim to the Crown will not be wanting, nor a strong Party to support it. From whence it is easy to see, the Tranquillity they promise themselves, can never take place, an undisturbed Possession of the Crown cannot be obtained, Divisions will not only subsist but increase with all the Mischiefs of them, Trade will be damped, Forces must be kept, and Taxes be continued, and those heavier much than ever.

What now upon this View will the Nation get by a Change? Which is most eligible to a *Protestant People*,

to preserve the present Settlement against a *Popish* Rival, or to bring in a *Popish* Pretender to be maintained with much greater Trouble and Charge, against a *Protestant* Prince? Besides the Danger, and the Expence of Blood and Treasure to bring such a Revolution about, and the great Probability there is, that should it succeed, that alone would in a little time of it self compleat our Ruin.

When sad Experience shall shew these to be the Fruits of a Change, it will be a poor Excuse for those who brought it on us, to say, *who would have thought it?* We did not design it, we hoped, and were promised better Things. Such an Ignorance could be no Excuse to any before God or Man; and if it could, cannot be pleaded in their behalf: They have been told again and again, that these would be the fatal Consequences of not supporting the present Establishment. This wise and honest Men, whose Virtue and whose Judgment they ought to have regarded, have often fore-warned them of, but they would not hear; they were given up by God to a Spirit of Delusion, as part of their Punishment, for not submitting to the Ways of his Providence, and paying Obedience to his Laws.

If this plain and unaffected Representation will not prevail with those of known Disaffection, to alter their Sentiments, and convince them of the extreme Sin and Folly of such Counsels, as can, humanly speaking, end in nothing but the Ruin of their Country, and of every thing that is dear to them; it will, it is to be hoped, have its Weight with Persons of a better Mind, and awaken those, who wish well to the present Settlement, from that Supineness and Security, into which our Enemies have by their Artifices lulled so many of them: and that they will not be any longer careless and indifferent, what becomes of Things, in which their Country's Happiness is so much concerned; which Behaviour and Temper, though not so criminal in it self, as an open Disaffection, is as fatal in its Consequences. For if those who mean no ill to the Government, will be Spectators only, and unconcernedly

look on, while others are endeavouring the Subversion of it, this in the End will prove the same Thing, as directly joining with them, and the same Ruin and Destruction will result from it.

It is high Time therefore for those who wish better Things, to look about them, and to be upon their Guard, and consider, that they who are not against the Enemies of the Government, are for them; and that if they are indifferent, they do as much as their Enemies desire of them. To this end, let them take Care how they give Credit to groundless Aspersions on the Government, particularly to that most dangerous, as well as most senseless Calumny, that the King and his Ministers are imposing a Sham-Plot upon the Nation, which the Enemies of our Peace have been wonderfully industrious to spread, and have done it with notable Success. There being nothing of so much Service to a Conspiracy, or so likely to secure it from a Disappointment, as to persuade the People, that there is nothing in it, and that it is all a Fiction of the Court, it is no wonder those who are in it, or wish well to it, are much concerned to propagate such Reports; but how honest, sensible, well-meaning Men can be so imposed on, is amazing: Since no one Instance can be given, when a Prince from the Throne, or in any other authoritative Way, told his People, he had certain Intelligence of a Conspiracy against him, when it was not so. In truth, Men of Sense must have a strange Opinion of a King and his Ministers, before they can believe they would in so solemn a Manner impose a Plot upon them: They must suppose them devoid of all Honesty, or of all Understanding; the last, if they are deceived themselves, and believe there is a dangerous Conspiracy carrying on, when there really is none; and the first, if they would knowingly and willingly deceive the People into the Belief of a Plot of their own making. But why should men entertain either of these Opinions of the King, or those about him, that there is either no Sense, or no Truth in them? How
would

would Men of any Reputation like to be treated so themselves? How is so vile an Opinion of our Governors consistent with that Reverence and Honour, which by the most sacred Ties, by the Laws both of God and Man, is due to them? Such an Imputation on the Government is more particularly absurd in the present Case, because the Wit of Man can't find out one plausible Reason for such a Suspicion, or assign one End, which such an Imposition could serve; whereas the most ordinary Understanding might at the time the Plot was first discovered, have seen many Reasons to convince him, that it was impossible it should not be true.

Yet such has been the Industry of our Adversaries, they have taken such Advantage of the Indolence and Indifference which their late Misfortunes have thrown many into, they have applied themselves so artfully to their Passions and Discontents, as to infuse into great Numbers a Belief even of this Calumny, notwithstanding its very great Improbability; and from thence have been encouraged to persist in the Prosecution of their Conspiracy for many Months after it has been discovered. They concluded that those whom they had deluded into a Disbelief of their Plot, were in their Hearts with them; or at least were indifferent, and would give them no Disturbance. The Conclusion indeed was a little too hasty; but thus much they might safely promise themselves, that if their Plot were not thought real, no Measures to disconcert it would be vigorously pursued, or duly executed. People will not be active to discover and defeat Designs, that are not believed; and when things are ripe for the Execution of a Plot, 'tis then commonly too late to begin an Opposition to it.

'Tis this Supineness and Disbelief which they have deluded so many into, that seems to have been the principal Encouragement to the Conspirators to persist in their Designs. If therefore those who are really Friends to the Government, and wish well to the *Protestant* Succession, would

would throw off that Coldness and Indifference, which otherwise may prove so fatal to them, this would deprive our Enemies of that, wherein they place their chief Confidence: And then we might reasonably hope, they would either desist from their wicked Enterprizes, or would pursue them to their own Confusion. And either way this, like other abortive Plots, will tend to the Increase of the Welfare it was intended to destroy, and to the firmer Establishment of the Crown in the King and his illustrious House. For Providence will not be wanting to us, if we are not shamefully wanting to our selves. Of this God has given us frequent and great Assurances in the many Successes, Deliverances and Discoveries, with which he has hitherto wonderfully blessed the King, and his People in him. For which, and all his other signal Mercies to this Nation, be ascribed to his holy Name all Honour, Glory, and Power, now and ever.

F I N I S.



